



Mayor and Council Meeting Business Session Minutes June 13, 2011 7:00 pm

The Riverdale Mayor and City Council met on June 13, 2011 at 7:00 pm for the purpose of conducting a regular Business Session. The meeting was held in the Council Chambers at City Hall located at 7200 Church Street, Riverdale, Georgia 30274.

Call to Order and Welcome

With a quorum present, Mayor Evelyn Wynn-Dixon called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Roll Call

All members of the governing body were present.

Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance:

Mr. Roland Downing, Riverdale Downtown Development Authority Chairperson, led the Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

THE SERGEANT IN ARMS PUBLICLY READ THE RULES OF CONDUCT

Approval of Agenda:

Mayor Dixon called for additions, deletions, and or changes to the agenda.

Postponement: **None.**

Tabled: **None.**

Additions: **None.**

Deletions: **None.**

Motion: Council Member Kenny Ruffin moved to adopt the agenda. Council Member Wanda Wallace moved to second the motion. Measure was adopted unanimously by a vote of 4/0.

Presentation(s):

Presentation by the Riverdale Downtown Development Authority and the Benoit Group

(Please see Exhibit A: PowerPoint Presentations)

Mr. Mike Syphoe, RDDA Executive Director, provided the Mayor and Council with an update on the recent development activities. He reminded them of the educational component that the City planned to bring to the Town Center site. He said the plans had not been solidified; however, he wanted to inform the members of the governing body of who he had been in touch with regarding the project. He said once plans have been finalized, the Mayor and Council will have the opportunity to say what they want at the site. He said the members of the governing body will always have the final say. Mr. Syphoe assured the Mayor and Council that the RDDA would heavily scrutinize all plans prior to presenting them for consideration. He explained that the initial concept included a two-fold use for the hotel. He said Atlanta Technical College students would be able to acquire hands-on learning at the hotel site. He further explained that the areas of study would be hospitality management and culinary arts.

He introduced the Mayor and Council to Dr. Alvetta Thomas, President of Atlanta Technical College.

Dr. Thomas informed the Mayor and Council of the college's plan to partner with the City of Riverdale. She indicated that the post-secondary education experience has expanded far beyond the traditional four year college scenario, and community colleges like Atlanta Technical College are rapidly emerging as first choice alternatives for getting a stronger foothold in the urban workplace.

Dr. Thomas said all of the college's programs take a building block approach. You can enroll in a technical certificate of credit program, which will build into a diploma program, which will build into an Associate's Degree Program. She said there are exit points along the way meaning you can graduate with a certificate, a diploma or a degree and typically they go to work or to a four year institution. Dr. Thomas further indicated that Riverdale presents the perfect opportunity that the college is looking for. She indicated that she had dedicated staff to work on the Riverdale project. She said it is incumbent upon the college to have a strong presence in Clayton County. She stated that she looks forward to a partnership with the City.

Mayor Dixon called for questions and concerns from the members of the governing body.

Council Member Stamps-Jones opined that it will be a great project. She said she has always admired two-year colleges in that it prepares students for the workforce upon graduation. She said all students do not want to attend a four-year college and the two-year option should be available. She indicated that she looks forward to working with the college.

Council Member Hall thanked Dr. Thomas for her presentation.

Council Member Wanda Wallace recanted Mr. Syphoe's earlier statement about the plans not being solid at this time. She asked when the RDDA would be able to provide the Mayor and Council with definitive plans. She said there had been ongoing discussions about what would be done; however, there had not been any action to support those discussions. She asked Dr. Thomas how long it would take to see some activity.

Dr. Thomas said she would have to secure approval from the college's parent organization, the Technical College Systems of Georgia and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. She said those steps alone will take approximately a year to a year and a half.

Council Member Kenny Ruffin said he recalled meeting Dr. Thomas prior to the ground-breaking for the new city hall. He told her that Riverdale is an excellent choice for the college. He encouraged Dr. Thomas to attend some of the upcoming city-sponsored events.

Mr. Syphoe introduced Jim Adams and Andy McClelland as partners as well.

Mr. McClelland informed the Mayor and Council that he and Mr. Adams both have extensive backgrounds in hotel & hospitality management and they look forward to bringing their expertise to the proposed partnership with Riverdale. Mr. Adams added that their experience is enough to guide the Riverdale project in the direction that it needs to go structurally.

Council Member Stamps-Jones said that considering the magnitude of work that the two of them had done, they can appreciate the fact that Riverdale is a jewel. She further stated that the partnership can be compared to a marriage. She said it appears to be a wonderful venture to afford students with the opportunity to gain hands-on learning.

Council Member Hall added that he is old school and does not like to refer to anyone by his/her first name. He asked the gentlemen to state their full names for the record. He also asked the gentlemen to clarify if they were a company or not. The gentlemen responded that the name of their company is the Biltmore Group. They also stated that they have completed projects separately and jointly under other company names.

Council Member Wallace asked about the status of the financing. She indicated that she does not want to see the project fall through the cracks.

Mr. Syphoe indicated that the project will be two-fold. He said there will be a parallel-track in that the City does not have to wait on the school in order to initiate the hotel piece. He added that while the school works on securing the necessary approvals to move forward, the Biltmore Group will continue to work on the hotel side.

Mr. Adams indicated that the Biltmore Group needs to meet with Dr. Thomas to determine the needs of the students.

Dr. Thomas said once a concrete plan is in place she can begin to do what she needs to do on her end.

Mr. Adams said that the Biltmore Group has extensive experience with interacting with colleges on this level so they are prepared to move forward with the partnership. He said their experience also gives them an idea of what is to be expected going forward.

Council Member Ruffin said that the City is already ahead of the curve in that Dr. Thomas has already met with Dr. Edmond T. Heatley, Superintendent for the Clayton County Public Schools. He said it is vital to know what the educational level of the graduating class is so that the college will know how to prepare for the students. He indicated that he looks forward to the new venture.

Mayor Dixon indicated that she is elated about the project as well. She further stated that the partnership puts the City one step closer to becoming the 'Buckhead of the South.' She thanked the visitors for attending the meeting.

Mr. Syphoe introduced The Benoit Group to the Mayor and Council. He indicated that the Benoit Group attended the City of Riverdale Developer's Day. He said the group had been thoroughly interviewed and he wanted to introduce them to the governing body as the new partners for the residential phase of the Town Center Project.

Eddy Benoit, President & CEO of the Benoit Group, provided a presentation to the Mayor and Council. He said he is honored to be considered as a partner with the City of Riverdale. He said the project will encompass the "Live, Work, Play and Educate" components. He stated that the Benoit Group's real estate development operations leverage over 100 years of collective experience, on over \$2 billion of real estate projects.

Mr. Benoit further stated that the group's focus is on the development of affordable mixed-income housing, workforce housing, independent senior living, higher education student lodging, and mixed-use developments. He said that the group also offers Construction Management services on Government and Private sector projects both within the US and Internationally.

Torian Priestly, Vice President-Development & Advisory Services of the Benoit Group, provided a PowerPoint presentation to the Mayor and Council.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Official Meeting Minutes from May 31, 2011 Meeting Minutes.

Motion: Council Member Kenny Ruffin moved to adopt the Consent Agenda. Council Member Stamps-Jones moved to second the motion. Measure was adopted unanimously by a vote of 4/0.

PUBLIC COMMENT: *No Action Required.*

The following individual(s) offered public comments:

None.

Resolution No. 31-06-2011 Vendor Service Agreement for Landscaping Services

Mr. Bennie Rose presented Resolution No. 31-06-2011. He informed the Mayor and Council that after holding a mandatory pre-bid conference, only two companies submitted bids to the City. He said a review committee was formed and it was determined that TruGreen Landscape was the best fit for the contract.

Mr. Rose indicated that if awarded the contract, TruGreen would mow, weed, edge, trim, prune, maintain beds and spray all areas that were designated by the City. He asked for permission for the City Manager to enter into a contractual agreement with TruGreen on behalf of the City.

Mayor Dixon thanked Mr. Rose for his presentation. She called for questions and concerns from the members of the governing body.

Council Member Ruffin said he was surprised that TruGreen's response was vastly different from WorkTec's response.

Council Members Wallace and Hall did not have any questions or comments.

Council Member Stamps-Jones asked how soon the contract would commence once approval is secured.

Mr. Rose responded that the contract would commence on July 1st.

Council Member Stamps-Jones reminded Mr. Rose that only two bids had been submitted. She asked if that created any concerns for him. She asked him if there were any alternatives.

Mr. Rose responded that there were initially seven companies who attended the pre-bid conference. He said Worktec and TruGreen were the only companies who could handle a project of this magnitude. Mr. Rose said the City would continue to receive service from the current vendor and City Staff would be responsible for the maintenance of the right-a-ways and other areas that are not covered under the contract.

Council Member Stamps-Jones asked if the contractual amount is negotiable.

Mr. Rose said the pricing depends on services rendered.

Council Member Hall thanked Mr. Rose for his presentation. He opined that it would be cheaper to hire workers to maintain the grounds.

Mr. Rose said that hiring employees is an avenue that needs to be explored in that the impact of benefits and employee costs would have to be considered.

Council Member Hall asked if it would be easier to manage employees rather than a company. He said the City has direct control over employees and not vendors. He said how the City could ensure that the company does what it says it will do in terms of rendering services. He asked why there was such a variance between the amounts that were quoted by TruGreen and WorkTec.

Council Member Hall continued that there was a company who was supposed to provide exterminating services to a housing development. He said shortly after the services commenced, the homes were infested with termites. Council Member Hall added that a soil test was performed and it was determined that the company never sprayed for termites. He said he does not want the City to end up in a similar situation. Council Member Hall further stated that he wants accountability measures to be put in place.

Mr. Rose said the RFP was written explicitly and plainly. He said he could not speak to why the numbers were so different. He said he is charged with overseeing the work of vendors and employees to ensure that they are doing what is required of them.

Mr. Rose informed the Mayor and Council that he contacted TruGreen's municipal clients to determine if there had been any issues with their service delivery. He said he was pleased to report that all clients provided satisfactory reports and therefore; he is comfortable with moving forward with the contract.

Council Member Ruffin asked for permission to call Ms. Lolita Grant to the podium for questioning.

In response to questions posed by Council Member Ruffin regarding salary and benefits, Ms. Grant indicated that when employees are hired, the City not only pays the salary, but there are costs associated with providing benefits.

Mr. Ruffin added that if the City were to employ three employees to the General Services Department, their combined salaries and benefits would exceed the total amount of the TruGreen contract.

Council Member Hall asked for permission to redirect the line of questioning.

Council Member Hall said since the topic of cost benefit analysis of hiring employees was on the table, would it be easier to privatize the Police and Fire Departments.

Ms. Grant indicated that she could not speak to an issue she was not prepared to discuss.

Motion: Council Member Cynthia Stamps-Jones moved to postpone Resolution No. 31-06-2011 Vendor Service Agreement for Landscaping Services. Council Member Wayne Hall moved to second the motion. Resolution No. 31-06-2011 Vendor Service Agreement for Landscaping Services was postponed unanimously by a vote of 4/0.

Resolution No. 32-06-2011 Vendor Service Agreement for Demolition Service

Atty. Sharonda Boyce presented Resolution No. 32-06-2011. She pointed out that there were three resolutions up for consideration before the members of the governing body. Ms. Boyce reminded the Mayor and Council of their recent approval of the demolition of city owned structures located at 904 Wilson Road, 919 Wilson Road, and 970 Wilson Road, Riverdale, Georgia. She added that the contractual agreement will also include the removal of asbestos at 782 Orme Street.

Atty. Boyce continued that the initial resolution was not inclusive of language authorizing the city manager to execute the aforementioned contractual agreements on behalf of the City. She said the agenda item authorizes the city manager to execute such agreements.

Mayor Dixon called for questions and concerns from the members of the governing body.

There were none posed.

Motion: Council Member Kenny Ruffin moved to adopt Resolution No. 32-06-2011 A, B, and Council Member Wanda Wallace moved to second the motion. Council Member Wayne Hall abstained from voting on the measure. Resolution No. 32-06-2011 was enacted unanimously by a vote of 3/0/1 abstention.

Resolution No. 33-06-2011 Governing Fund Type & Levels of Reserves Policy

Ms. Lolita Grant, Finance Director, presented 33-06-2011. She stated that Governmental Standards Board (GASB) issued Statement 54 which changed the terminology and reporting relative to the presentation of fund balance in governmental funds at the fund level for Cities with fiscal year ending June 30, 2011. She stated that currently, the City has fund balance terms such as reserved, unreserved and designed. She added that going forward; the new pronouncement requires the terms to be replaced with terms such as Non-spendable, restricted, committee, Assigned and Unassigned (detailed definitions were provided on the Agenda Request Form). She asked for permission to enact a policy to support the proposed resolution.

Mayor Dixon called for questions and concerns.

There were none posed.

Motion: Council Member Kenny Ruffin moved to adopt Resolution No. 33-06-2011. Council Member Wanda Wallace moved to second the motion. Resolution No. 33-06-2011 was enacted unanimously by a vote of 4/0.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENT(S):

Council Member Cynthia Stamps-Jones

Council Member Cynthia Stamps-Jones commented that the school, hotel, retail and luxury apartments will attract more people to the City. She said it is a wonderful venture that she looks forward to working on.

Council Member Wayne Hall

Council Member Wayne Hall thanked the public for attending the meeting. He told them to have a safe journey home and he hopes to see them in attendance at the next meeting.

Council Member Wanda Wallace

Council Member Wanda Wallace thanked the public for attending the meeting. She told them to have a safe journey home and she expects to see them on June 29th.

Council Member Kenny Ruffin

Council Member Kenny Ruffin said it was great Dr. Thomas, The Benoit Group and The Biltmore Group, came armed with tangible information. He said the City should continue to look for ways to increase sustainability throughout the City. He said it is great that there are sustainability plans for the Town Center site; however, there needs to be discussions about how the City will sustain the Chateau Forest area and the area adjacent to the Riverdale Home Depot Store. He said it is important to have a vision of sustainability for the next twenty years.

Mayor Evelyn Wynn-Dixon

Mayor Evelyn Wynn-Dixon said the work at the Town Center site is vital to the City's future. She said she looks forward to working with Dr. Thomas, The Benoit Group and the Biltmore Group. She added that Riverdale will continue to be the jewel of the Southern Crescent.

Mayor Dixon said *Wind Down Thursday* and the *Movies in the Park* were both big hits with the citizens. She said she is elated to report that Louisiana Catfish will relocate to another establishment in Riverdale. She said it the restaurant will undergo a name change and will now be called, Louisiana Catfish Bar and Grille.

Mayor Dixon said businesses are expanding and that is great news for the local economy.

Mayor Dixon thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn was offered by Council Member Kenny Ruffin. Council Member Wanda Wallace offered the second. The meeting adjourned at 8:17PM